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From: editor@mountainwestnews.org
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Bar V In Montana

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Mountain West News is a
program of the
O'Connor Center for the Rocky
Mountain West at
The University of Montana

Friday,
Aug. 28, 2015

Produced by Shellie Nelson, MW News Editor

[Mountain West Voices](#)

Editor's notes:

In the **Rockies today**, a federal judge in North Dakota put changes to the Clean Water Act on hold.

The ruling came just hours before the changes, which farmers and ranchers feared would have considerable effects on their operations, took effect. The federal judge ruled that the rule could require "jurisdictional studies," of every pipeline in North Dakota.

While the ruling came in a lawsuit filed by 13 states, including Montana, Colorado, Idaho and Wyoming, analysts said the ruling would apply in all 50 states. The Environmental Protection Agency has not responded to the ruling.

Also in the news, wildfires in Idaho and Montana require new evacuations, more information on the mine blowout in Colorado is released, and as federal prosecutors recommend sentencing for San Juan County Commissioner Phil Lyman for his role in an illegal ATV ride into Utah's Recapture Canyon in 2014, Lyman's attorneys say they have a BLM map dating back to 1979 that describes the road into the canyon as a public highway.

On Sunday morning, Yellowstone Public Radio will broadcast Mountain West Voices at 7 O'clock.

This broadcast features Guss Yellowhair, a Lakota artist from South Dakota's Pine Ridge Reservation, who talks about his role as "culture bearer," and about the importance of passing on tradition through language and music.

Barbara Theroux of Fact & Fiction reviews ["The Oregon"](#)

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Montana's two-year colleges
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Tune into Yellowstone Public Radio at 7 a.m. Sunday or listen online via the Mountain West Voices website.

Quote of the day:

"I'm not here to say don't worry, be happy, everything is great, we're wonderful, we never make mistakes because you know we do. We had a huge mistake last year at Mount Polley, but we are responsible. We do a good job. Our standards and our processes are more or less the same as Alaska, is what the state folks have told us. So, we don't have low standards and we do care not only about our environment, but we care about yours, and that's the central message I have."

British Columbia Mines Minister **Bill Bennett**, in a speech before the Ketchikan Chamber of Commerce on his last day of a five-day [trip to Alaska to develop an agreement with state officials on monitoring water quality and mining operations](#).
- KRBD.org

Rockies today

Federal judge in North Dakota puts Clean Water Act change on hold

Just hours before a federal regulation that would have extended the reach of the Clean Water Act was to take effect, a federal judge in North Dakota issued a temporary injunction putting the implementation of the rule on hold. The injunction was issued in a lawsuit filed by Alaska, Arizona, Arkansas, Colorado, Idaho, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, New Mexico, Nevada, North Dakota, South Dakota and Wyoming.

Flathead Beacon (AP); August 28

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Arch Coal's stock price up 458 percent

St. Louis-based Arch Coal, which operates coal mines in Wyoming's Powder River Basin, has seen its stock price increase 458 percent from the \$1.26 per share on Aug. 14 to \$7.03 on Thursday, and was as low as 20 cents a share in July. Analysts cite the coal company's negotiations with debtors as well as billionaire investor George Soros' purchase of 500,000 shares of the company's stock in June for the valuation increase.

Casper Star-Tribune; August 28

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National Energy Board tracks drop in shipments of oil by rail

The declining price of oil has taken the amount of oil exported by rail from Canada to the United States down along with it, with the National Energy Board reporting that shipments of oil by rail declined by 30 percent between the first and second quarters of this year, declining from 120,000 barrels per day in the first quarter to 84,000 BPD in the second quarter. In the last quarter of 2014, 159,000 barrels of oil per day were moving by rail in Canada.

Calgary Herald; August 28

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B.C. mines minister visits Alaska to talk transboundary water issues

Bill Bennett, British Columbia's Mines Minister spent five days this week in Alaska, meeting with elected officials, stakeholders and other groups about existing and proposed mines in the Canadian province that may affect the Unuk, the Taku and the Stikine rivers that flow from B.C. into Southeastern Alaska, and on Thursday, Bennett spoke to a packed Chamber of Commerce meeting in Ketchikan, where he acknowledged the unease the August 2014 Mount Polley spill had created in Alaska about the province's mining oversight, and expressed confidence the province and the state could come up with a plan to ensure oversight of mining in British Columbia that would protect rivers that run into Alaska.

KRBD.org; August 28

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EPA documents detail sequence of events at Colorado mine blowout

Employees of the company contracted by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency to conduct cleanup operations at the Gold King Mine near Silverton were forced to scramble to move equipment and themselves out of the way when water began flowing from the mine in Colorado. The blowout released 3 million gallons of mustard-colored mine water into the Animas River on Aug. 5.

Durango Herald; August 28

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Montana town evacuated, highway, rail line shut down by wildfire

The Sheep Fire in Northwest Montana burned to within a half-mile of Essex, forcing the evacuation of the community, and the BNSF rail line and U.S. Highway 2 were again closed to traffic. Crews are working to shore up firelines as forecasts call for high winds on Saturday. Another fire burning near Tarkio prompted the evacuation of outfitters and cabins in the Fish Creek drainage on Thursday.

Missoulian; August 28

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More evacuations ordered on Idaho wildfire near Riggins

The TePee Springs fire near Riggins burned across an additional 11 square miles on Thursday, and new evacuations were ordered for Idahoans in the area. Eighteen miles of the Lower Salmon River were also closed to recreational use to keep people out of harm's way. In Northern Idaho, the 74-square-mile Clearwater Complex is now 65 percent contained. In Central Idaho, residents near Elk City were alerted to be ready to evacuate, as the 28,491-acre Wash Fire continued to add acreage. This article updates readers on wildfire activity across Idaho.

Idaho Statesman and wire reports; August 28

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- [Read updates on wildfires in Idaho, Montana in Environment](#)

; August 28

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Utah county commissioner's attorneys say map exonerates him

This week, U.S. federal prosecutors submitted sentencing recommendations for San Juan County Commission Phil Lyman and Monticello City Councilman Monte Wells for their roles in organizing last year's ATV ride into Utah's Recapture Canyon, an area closed to motorized use by the Bureau of Land Management in 2007 to protect ancient artifacts in the area. But attorneys for Lyman said they have obtained a map from BLM files dating back to 1979 that

designates the route as a public highway, and state Rep. Mike Noel, who worked for the BLM as a realty specialist, has verified the map.

Salt Lake Tribune; August 28

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Montana grain farmers find profit in 'pulse' crops

An ancient way of rotating crops is plowing profit back into the fields of Montana grain farmers, who are planting chickpeas, lentils and beans on their wheat fields on a rotating schedule, improving the lands and boosting their bottom lines.

Great Falls Tribune; August 28

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Water

Californians again exceed water conservation goals

In July, Californians cut their water use by 31 percent, the largest reduction in the past year when drought restrictions were put in place.

New York Times; August 28

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Opinion

Wyoming's federal lawmakers need to press to renew Land,

Water fund

Funding for the Land and Water Conservation Fund, which has provided \$17 million in funding for parks, pools and public lands over the past five decades, expires on Sept. 30 if Congress does not reauthorize the fund, and given the benefits Wyoming has reaped from the federal fund, U.S. Sens. John Barrasso and Mike Enzi and U.S. Rep. Cynthia Lummis should all be working right now to reauthorize funding.

Casper Star-Tribune; August 28

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Beyond the region

Copper miners in Arizona cutting production, jobs

Phoenix-based Freeport-McMoRan Copper and Gold and Tucson-based Asarco LLC announced cost-cutting measures, including layoffs, in response to a global decline in the demand for copper.

Arizona Daily Star; August 28

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Study finds Washington state glacier shrinking faster than predicted

Scientists and members of the Nooksack Indian Tribe are tracking the rapidly melting glaciers on Mount Baker in Washington state, and if the glaciers continue to retreat at the rate seen this summer, it will be gone completely within the next five decades. Similar results have been observed in glaciers in Montana, California and Alaska.

Flathead Beacon (AP); August 28

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